

Home Is Where The Shitty Coffee Is by underthenorthstar

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Summary:

You've been tutoring Eleven for the year in between the Demogorgon and the Mind Flayer. You've managed to develop a massive crush on her surrogate father, Jim Hopper, in that time. One late night over cups of bad coffee, things finally come to a head.

Home Is Where The Shitty Coffee Is

Author's Note:

New Hopper fic! I'm adoring writing this big fluffy bear. Let me know what you think!

TW: Implied age gap, cursing, self loathing, Implied sexy times

Having a crush was hard.

Having a crush on an older man was very hard.

Having a crush on an older man whose daughter you were tutoring and who looked at you in a way you couldn't explain that made you feel like maybe he might feel something, too, but you were too nervous to say anything, was extremely hard.

When Dr Owens had told you a year ago to leave your job at Hawkins lab and go play teacher to a little girl with telekinetic abilities, you were quick to jump on board. You hated the lab, hated what they were doing there. Plus, you were curious to meet the infamous Eleven. So when he asked you to exchange your lab coat for math books and reading lists, you were more than happy to oblige. You hadn't expected to come to love the shy young girl so much. And you definitely hadn't planned on growing feelings for her surrogate father.

Jim Hopper was a big bear of a man, all rough edges and gruff demeanour. He exuded a rather intimidating "Do not fuck with me or I will mess you up" attitude that had most people running for the hills. But not you. It had taken time, but you had eventually become his friend. You had been lucky enough to get to see past all that, to see what lay beneath the walls he so carefully constructed.

And what was underneath was a kind man who risked himself for others, a man who loved with all his heart but was scared to let it show. A man who would go the extra mile, would easily lay down his life if it meant saving another. A mad with a good, albeit badly

scarred heart. A man who made your stomach flip and your heart pound.

A man who was currently sitting in front of you, looking damn fine in his jeans and button up flannel. His sleeves were partially rolled up to bare his burly forearms, the soft looking material stretched tight across his broad shoulders. He had a cup of coffee in one large hand and a cigarette dangling precariously out of his mouth. No one else may agree with you, but he looked the epitome of sex appeal. Damn it, you just wanted to crawl across the table and-

You snapped out of your lust driven reverie at the sound of his rich voice, cheeks pinking as you realized you had probably been staring. "Sorry-what?"

"I said, thanks for agreeing to stick around this next year," Hopper took a long drag on his cig, blowing the smoke through his nostrils. "Kid is so determined to go to school next fall, doesn't want to get left behind by her friends."

"She's very bright," you couldn't help but smile as you thought of how far your little pupil had come. "She learned a lot this last year, and she's already on an excellent track for this year. I'm sure she'll catch up in time."

"I just hope she doesn't burn herself out," Hopper sighed, stubbing the butt of his cigarette out on the ashtray. "I think she's trying to bury what happened last month. Lose herself in her studies."

You shuddered, not wanting to think about the shadowy monster that had threatened you all. "I don't blame her. Helping her study helps me forget, too."

Hopper studied you for a moment, gaze searching. It made you a little warm. "Is that one of the reasons you decided to stay?"

You started, slightly taken aback at the question. "What do you mean?"

Hopper looked down at his coffee, lines forming between his eyebrows. You wished you could smooth them away. "Look, you did

good work this last year. But you were employed by the lab, it was your job. They're gone now. You have no obligation to stay anymore. You know I can barely pay you. I'm sure you could go to another lab somewhere, find a new job."

You frowned, and your heart gave a little throb. "Do you not want me to stay? You asked.

"No, no," Hopper shook his head, looking up at you. His eyes were unreadable. "You're great. And Ellie really likes you. I guess I just, thought you would want to leave. Find something better. I was honestly surprised when you agreed to stay."

That made your heart hurt even more. "Why?"

He shifted uncomfortably in his chair. "Like I said, the pay. The lost opportunities. Having to deal with me. You never had to stay for these coffee sit downs. Heaven knows I'm poor company and my coffee is pretty shitty." He sighed, and every crack on his heart sighed with him.

Your mouth hung open. How could he not see it? That you loved being here, loved teaching Ellie and seeing the wonder and excitement in her eyes when she learned something new? That you cared for him (even if he believed it was only as a friend), that you enjoyed his company? This was where you wanted to be, whether or not you ever got the chance to hold his heart. Hawkins was home. This was home.

He was home. Coffee and all.

"I like it here," you blurted, speaking without even thinking. "I like Ellie, she is so bright and sweet and teaching her is a joy. I like coming here to the quiet, away from town. I like spending time with you like this after she goes to bed. It's my favourite part of the day, honestly. I miss it the days I don't come to tutor. If I left I'd miss Ellie's smile and the quiet of the woods and the way you look in those damn flannel shirts....." you took a breath, you knew you should stop, but the words just spilt out like a waterfall, like the dam had broken and there was no holding it back.

“I would miss Ellie’s hugs and your shitty coffee and the way the sun sets over the trees. I’d miss how you smell like smoke and feel like warmth, and how when you smile it makes your eyes crinkle. And how you make me feel safe, and the way my skin sparks when you touch me, and, and- oh!”

You didn’t get to finish, as with one swift movement Hopper had stood from his and strode over to you. He looked down at you for a moment, the most vulnerable look on his rugged face you had ever seen. You waited, breath held in anticipation. The clock ticked quietly on the wall...

And then he was grabbing you up in his arms, pushing you against the fridge, and kissing you senseless.

It was everything you dreamed. His lips were warm and his tongue tasted like beer and smoke and something sweet. He kissed like he fought, all male instinct and pure adrenaline. It made your heart race, and you kissed him back eagerly. You felt hot and flushed all over, pressed against his chest, hands gripping at his big shoulders like your life depended on it. His own large hands were spanning your waist, and you wriggled in his arms so your shirt rode up, and his fingers grazed bare skin.

The groan that escaped his throat was the sexiest thing you had ever heard. “I sure as shit hope I read that right,” he mumbled against your mouth, hands squeezing your sides gently.

You pulled back to look at him. His face was still a mask of unsureness, even after your enthusiastic response to his advances. It made you ache for him, this man so believing he was undeserving of any sort of affection.

“You did,” you said, knowing he needed it stated plainly. “I’ve really had it bad for you for a while now. I was just scared you didn’t feel the same way. And I thought maybe it was inappropriate, considering my position.”

He sighed and removed a hand from your waist to scrub it over his face. “It probably is. Damn it, woman, I am not the best choice. Pretty, smart, sweet thing like you could do a whole hell of a lot

better.”

“I don’t think so,” you shook your head, squeezing his shoulders gently. “You are a little jagged and broken, sure, but isn’t everybody? You are kind and big hearted and you give so much of yourself, to Ellie and to this whole town. You are a hero and a good man. And sexy as hell to boot.”

Hopper coughed in embarrassment, and the tips of his ears turned an almost adorable shade of red. “You must be blind. And insane.”

“Nope, just crazy about you,” you grinned at him, leaning in to press your mouth once more to his. This kiss was slower, sweeter. You let Hopper languidly take the lead, too overwhelmed by the taste of him and the warmth that surrounded you as you nestled yourself into his body. His arms tightened around you, and what sounded like a rumble of contentment sounded in his chest.

“I....may be kind of crazy about you too,” Hopper mumbled as he broke your kiss after a few moments, and the words sent a little thrill of delight racing down your spine. “Been trying to figure out how to tell you for a while.”

“Mmmmm, this is a pretty good way,” you sighed as he left your lips and began peppering kisses along your jaw. You whimpered as his beard brushed the tender skin behind your ear. A slow, sticky heat was beginning to form under your skin. You pressed yourself even closer to him, desperate to feel every inch of him that you could. Maybe it was stupid rush headlong into this, but you found you didn’t care. You’d wanted him for far too long. “Of course, there are lots of other ways, too.”

You were rewarded with a soft nip to your earlobe. “Oh? And what might those be?” His voice had dropped an octave, and the gravelly tone made your toes curl. It seemed like Hopper was on the same page. It had been too much for too long. The heat in you grew even hotter.

“Making me more shitty coffee, like it’s a date,” you giggled teasingly, the sound breaking off into a breathy whine as he tugged harder on your ear.

“Fuck the shitty coffee,” he growled, hands once again slipping back under your shirt. Calloused fingers stroked your sides almost reverently. “I think we’ve had enough of those ‘dates’, don’t you, baby?”

The endearment made you sigh in delight. His hands began inching steadily higher. You wriggled against him at the fire-drenched touches, your pulse thrumming and your heart singing.

“Hmmm, I guess so. There’s always the morning, after all.”

And you were right. There was the morning (You drank the coffee. Hopper pretended to while looking wholly embarrassed. Ellie smiled smugly into her Eggos). And there were many, many more after that.

The coffee stayed shitty, but your life was far from it.

Author's Note:

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